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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA COVERAGE - VISIT OF APNSA HADLEY
SEPTEMBER 23 - 24, 2005

SUMMARY

1. Turkish media coverage of APNSA Hadley's September 23-25 visit to Ankara has generally been straightforward, accurate, and positive. Not surprisingly, most papers focused on Hadley's public remarks on the the need for the United States to do more to address Turkey's concerns about PKK terrorism. They also highlighted US concerns, expressed by APNSA, about Iran and Syria. Many media outlets characterized the visit as a sign of the continuing importance of the strategic relationship between the two countries, and claimed that it demonstrated that the Turkish parliament's March 1, 2003 decision not to allow US troops to cross Turkish territory on their way to Iraq has been relegated to history. In addition to the substantive coverage, APNSA Hadley was portrayed positively in his visit to a municipal youth center in Ankara. Most papers carried photos of Hadley with Turkish young people doing folk dances, playing in rock music, or challenging him at table tennis. These images were also carried repeatedly on major Turkish television channels following the visit. END SUMMARY.

STRAIGHTFORWARD REPORTING ON APNSA VISIT

2. Turkish media coverage of the visit was largely straightforward and accurate, drawing heavily on Hadley's public statements. A representative sample follow:

"Yeni Safak" (Islamist-oriented, pro-government): "Now is the Time to Struggle Against the PKK" - The United States, which has made continual promises to struggle against the PKK but hasn't taken any action, has raised hopes once again. US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, visiting Turkey on his first trip abroad in his new position, said that the time has come for the struggle against the PKK. It has also been learned that a consultation mechanism will be established between Turkey and the United States to help bring an end to the PKK presence in northern Iraq. Hadley signaled that "various means" must be found to address the PKK problem in northern Iraq, and said that coalition forces must work on this issue with Turkey and Iraq. Following his discussions with MFA Undersecretary Tuygan, TGS Chief General Ozkok, and NSC Director Alpogan, Hadley said that "we need to eliminate the safe haven that the PKK is exploiting in northern Iraq." He added that "we also need to cut off financing and other kinds of support for the PKK," and said the United States "needs to to better" on this.

"Hurriyet" (mainstream secular): "We Have Forgetten About March 1" -- There are important messages from President George W. Bush for Ankara. Stephen Hadley brought these messages. But who is Hadley? When Condoleezza Rice became Secretary of State, he was the key man who took over for her

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at the NSC. As the Natioanl Security Advisor, he is President Bush's right-hand man. The messages President Bush is sending to Turkey were very clear. Bush is saying this: "Let's reestablish our strategic partnership. I am determined. We have completely turned the page. March 1 is now history. Let's melt the ice completely. Let's fight against terrorism in the Middle East together, and build democracy." Bush, who said two years ago that "nothing is left of our strategic partnership with Turkey," now wants to shore up the bridges once again. It's as if Washington has understood how difficult it will be to establish democracy in the Middle East, and wants to work together with Turkey.

Bush also had an important message on the PKK. Hadley said that "the President understands in his heart the pain you feel as the result of PKk terrorism, because every morning when he sits down at his desk, he feels that same pain. Every day we are losing US soldiers to terrorism. Don't

worry, we will get rid of the PKK." But when? Even if Talabani promises a hundred times, nobody in Ankara believes that he is going to eliminate the PKK. The Turkish side told Hadley that "the strategic partnership includes the PKK issue. If Iraq breaks apart and a Kurdish state is established, fire will engulf the region. It will be a disaster." Hadley replied that "we also oppose a Kurdish state. Talabani and Barzani also need Turkey. Be patient." Maybe 6 months. Maybe 1 year. But why? Because Bush's first goal is to gain passage of the new constitution on October 15. He is also trying to get a new government elected in December. The Americans are also working to establish an Iraqi army. So Bush cannot give the green light for a US military operation at this point. He is insisting that we wait. Hadley also told Ankara that the tension on the Syria issue is now behind us. "We were looking to isolate Assad completely. We may not always view things in exactly the same way. We have a lot to learn from you," he said. I also heard that there was an interesting exchange between Hadley and PM Erdogan. When Erdogan was explaining Turkey's democratic experience, he said "I am a religious person, but I am prime minister of a secular country." Hadley was impressed by this.

"Zaman" (Islamist-oriented, pro-government): "Hadley Takes the Pulse in Ankara on Syria and Iran" - US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, who said he was visiting Turkey "to show the importance of the strategic relationship," spoke in a way that gave hope that the PKK presence in Iraq could be eliminated. Hadley also tested Turkey's approach on Iran and Syria, which he said had "engaged in behavior that is very worrisome." Hadley told the press that there are many problems in Iraq, and that the PKK presence is one of those problems. He said "we need to work together. We need to eliminate the safe haven that the PKK has been exploiting in northern Iraq." When asked whether the United States is stringing Turkey along on the PKK issue, Hadley answered that "the time has now come." He added that "we have done some things, but there are many other things we will do. We need to cut off financial support for the PKK. We need to find some things we can do in northern Iraq. Coalition forces need to work together with Turkey and Iraq." Syria and Iran were among the important issues on Hadley's agenda in Ankara. "Some of Syria's behavior is a source of concern for us - their support for terrorism, and the limitations on freedom for their people. We also have concerns about Iran - the lack of freedom, the nuclear program, and the support for terrorism. These are difficult issues, and it is important from our point of view to learn about each other's ideas," he said. According to information we have obtained, the Turkish side said that "every country has the right to benefit from nuclear energy for peaceful uses. But this needs to proceed in an open and transparent way, in cooperation with the IAEA." The need for "an appropriate level of consultation for cooperation between the two countries" was also discussed. With this in mind, the two sides will work on a consultation mechanism.

"Milliyet" (mainstream secular): "Hadley: Time to Intervene Against the PKK" - US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, who can be described as President Bush's right-hand man on foreign policy and national security issues, told Ankara that the US supports Turkey against the PKK and in the EU process, and said that "the time has come to struggle against the PKK." Hadley stressed in all of his comments the determination of the United States to act against the PKK. When he was asked when the time for an intervention will come, he replied that "the time has come now. It was useful for me to come and to learn what your government and your people think about this issue. The PKK is one of the issues that needs to be resolved in Iraq. We condemn PKK terrorism. We need to prevent northern Iraq from being a safe haven for this organization. We have taken some steps. Coalition forces will continue this struggle, along with Turkey and Iraq." Hadley stressed that one of the US priorities in the struggle against the PKK is the cutting off of financial sources. Hadley also met with young people at the Youth Center in Sincan, where Turkish tanks rolled through the streets following a performance of "Jerusalem night" as part of the February 28 process. It was learned that the visit was part of a plan to engage in a close dialogue with people in Muslim countries in order to repair the US image.

COMMENTARIES FOCUS ON SYRIA, MIDDLE EAST

13. Editorial comment on the Hadley visit was sparse, and focused more on Syria and the Middle East rather than the PKK. Several examples follow:

"Regime Change Scenarios for Syria" (Asli Aydintasbas in "Sabah"): "The expectation in Washington, as well as in international circles, is that as the result of the ongoing

Hariri investigation, regime change in Syria is a an increasingly likely possibility. The Bush administration views Assad as a weak leader, and does not see any progress by the regime regarding security and democratization issues. Ankara and other Western capitals have started discussing possible names to replace Assad. This issue was brought up during National Security Advisor Stephan Hadley's recent visit to Ankara as well. . Ankara worries about possible chaos in the event of a regime change in Syria, even if it comes about through the UN investigation. On the other hand, the Turkish government does not intend to continue to play a 'big brother' role for the Assad administration any longer. But Ankara does not want to see instability in Syria similar to what we have seen in Iraq. Moreover, Ankara wants to see tangible evidence from the UN investigation if it points to Syrian complicity. This message was also conveyed to Hadley."

"New Game Plan for the Middle East" (Murat Yetkin in "Radikal"): On Hadley's announced agenda were the war against terrorism, Iraq, Syria, Iran, Israel-Palestine, and Lebanon. The fact that of the seven political crisis topics the United States is now dealing with on a global basis, six - excluding only North Korea -- are focused in this region, in which Turkey is a key player. The United States, while hoping the chaos in Iraq will end as soon as possible, wants to focus its full attention on the situation in the Broader Middle East. It believes that developing its relations with Turkey will be in its interests in this regard. Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, and the possibility of a secular and democratic state being established in Palestine, the Syrian military's having been forced to withdraw from Lebanon following the February murder of former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri and the holding of the first free elections in Lebanon in decades, have all brought the United States' Middle East game plan to a new stage. The fact that German prosecutor Detlev Mehlis, who is investigating the Al-Hariri killing on behalf of the UN, engaged in questioning yesterday in Damascus regarding the Syrian connection, enhances the importance of the report that he will present in October. The United States currently sees Syria as the greatest obstacle to the environment of stability that it plans for the region. US intelligence sees Syria as a place where the armed groups fighting in Iraq gather and infiltrate into Iraq; the most recent operation in Tall Afar came in this context. The government of Bashar al-Asad is at the head of the list of regimes that, in Washington's view, have to be "brought into line" in short order or else overthrown.

"Strategic Partnership?" (Uluc Gurkan in "Star"): "Given the fact that National Security Advisor Hadley made his first tour abroad to Turkey, the Hadley visit was a very important event. During the visit, Hadley conveyed President Bush's message about forgetting the past and reestablishing the strategic partnership. When Turkish authorities asked about the PKK, Hadley confirmed that the issue is covered by the strategic partnership as well. The meaning of this message is very clear. The US wants Turkey to accept and assume the role designed for it within the Broader Middle East Initiative. The message also indicates that meeting this expectation is the only way to eliminate the PKK threat in northern Iraq. . Turkey is now being dragged into an adventure that will result in a redesign of the Middle East map. It is vitally important that Turkey stand on its own feet instead of fooling itself with carrots, such as possible US action on the PKK issue. Any adventure taken with the US will bring nothing but lost lives, blood, and a threat to our territorial integrity."

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